

Message Text

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ACTION FSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 PER-03 ABF-01 /027 W

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R 072030Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2192

INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY HAMILTON

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY/PORT OF SPAIN 107

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

UNCLAS CURACAO 144

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFIN, NA

SUBJECT: BUDGET/MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS CURACAO

REFERENCE: KINGSTON 859

THIS CONSULATE GENERAL IS IN FULL AGREEMENT WITH MR. EVERETT'S ASSESSMENT OF PROBLEMS HE HAS DISCUSSED. ADDITIONALLY THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE DEPARTMENT S ATTENTION AS CONCERNS THIS CONSULATE GENERAL:

1. HISTORICALLY, IT IS UNDERSTOOD, IN THE 1950'S THIS CONSULATE GENERAL HAD ITS OWN DISBURSING OFFICER. IN ORDER TO SAVE FUNDS AND CUT POSITIONS THE PRESENT WFC PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED. AT THAT TIME THE POST WAS ADVISED THAT ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREPARATION OF THE BUDGET WOULD BE MINIMAL. OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS THIS WAS THE CASE.

THE NEW BUDGET REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT HAS PLACED MUCH ADDITIONAL WORKLOAD AND RESPONSIBILITY ON THE POST, WHICH
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HAS NO BUDGET AND FISCAL OFFICER.

2. WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OFFICE OF FINANCE (OF/CAR, SUBSEQUENTLY AB/CAR AND CURRENTLY WFC) FOR SELECTED POSTS IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA THE DISBURSING OFFICER POSITION IN CURACAO WAS ABOLISHED. SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY RISE IN THE COMPLEXITY OF BUDGET AND FISCAL OPERATIONS AND WORKLOAD, WITH NO AVAILABILITY OF U.S. TRAINED BUDGET PERSONNEL EXCEPT ON COSTLY TDY ASSIGNMENTS. THIS, COUPLED WITH THE REMOTENESS OF THE FISCAL MANAGEMENT OFFICE, HAVE RESULTED IN A GRADUAL YET STEADY DETERIORATION AND THE PRESENT BUDGET/ MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS.

3. CURACAO STRONGLY CONCURS WITH THE NEED TO ADOPT ONE OR BOTH OF THE RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS CITED IN PARA 5 OF REFTEL. AS FAR AS NEW AND DIFFERENT SYSTEMS ARE CONCERNED, WITHOUT A FULL TIME U.S. TRAINED BUDGET AND FISCAL OFFICER THE CONSULATE GENERAL IS OF THE OPINION THAT IT IS DOUBTFUL IT WILL EVER BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK.

TO EXPECT LOCAL EMPLOYEES WITH LITTLE OR NO FORMAL ACCOUNTING BACKGROUND AND LITTLE TRAINING TO ACCOMPLISH THIS HIGHLY TECHNICAL TASK, ON A PART TIME BASIS, IS NOT FEASIBLE, AND CAN ALWAYS BE EXPECTED TO CREATE FUTURE PROBLEMS.

WITH REGARDS TO THE SECOND SOLUTION CITED IN PARA 5 OF REFTEL THIS POST FEELS THAT ANY REDUCTION IN THE SCOPE OF WFC S RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE DIRECTLY BENEFICIAL TO THE SMALLER POSTS WHICH CONTINUES TO DEPEND FULLY ON WFC'S FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED: THAT SMALLER POSTS THAT DO NOT HAVE FULL TIME US BUDGET AND FISCAL OFFICERS REVERT TO THE FORMER SYSTEM OF AN UNCOMPLICATED BUDGET SUBMISSION FOLLOWED BY THE "OLD FASHIONED" QUARTERLY FINANCIAL PLANS. IN SHORT "PROGRESS" AND COMPUTERS ARE KILLING US. LOFTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CURACA00144
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750083-0540
From: CURACAO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750373/aaaacnsa.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION FSE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KINGSTON 859
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 MAY 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <25 FEB 2004 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BUDGET/MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS CURACAO
TAGS: AFIN, NA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006